

With his new 440 Quintrex Hornet *Dead Fishy III* DAVID GREEN set out to develop the most innovative and practical tinny on the water. Read on to see if Greeny met the challenge.



Three Times A Charm

LAST YEAR I had one of those “stuff it all” type moments where my usual conservative approach to finances and fiscal restraint got ditched and I spent a shed load of dough on my boats. The revamping of my old six-metre Sportfish, *Gemma 3*, has previously been described in *Boat Fishing*, but at the same time as that was unfolding I decided to get a new tinny for fishing dams, creeks and barra rivers. *Dead Fishy II* was a 425 Stessl Edgetracker Tournament that had done a stack of work, but it was getting a bit tired, and I wanted something a bit bigger for the Daly and other croc filled NT rivers. After much deliberation I settled on a 440 Quintrex Hornet. As a platform, the Hornet has heaps of room for its size, and makes a great boat for both casting and trolling.

Quintrex was interested in trying a few new ideas in the layout of its Hornet hulls, and I spent a lot of time working with Craig Madam in the research and development of this boat. I live near the Quintrex factory in southern Queensland, and for months we floated ideas and made new drawings to make the boat's layout practical and efficient. From a fishing perspective, this

boat has been an absolute pleasure to work from, and after returning from two months away in the NT, the trailer has been towed over 10,000kms and the boat itself has travelled 1700km and caught hundreds of barra already.

The interesting bit has been how all the technology came together. Hornets are a great little fishing platform, and I'm a great believer in tiller operated outboards for small boats, as it increases available space, it makes the boat a lot more manoeuvrable when picking up crab pots, getting snags off and turning quickly. Side consoles are preferred by many but make a great intrusion into the work space. So my aim was to develop the most practical, sensible and innovative 4.4m tinny on the water. Working with Craig Madam was a great pleasure. We shared ideas, improved a lot of fittings to make them more multi-purposed and ended up creating a pretty special boat. While in some ways I was being a bit of a guinea pig for a few new ideas, after several months on the water I am still very impressed with this tinny. A lot of the modifications we made will be options packages in future boats.

This isn't an article where a fishing writer gets a free boat and waxes on lyrically about it. This research and development boat cost me full price and I reckon it is worth every cent and more.

The challenges in setting up this boat were many, and the ideas we were aiming to fit into a 4.4m hull meant that there needed to be very clever use of space. The first challenge was to create an unobtrusive space for two large deep cycle batteries to run the 80 pound thrust Minn Kota i-Pilot. Batteries have a great effect on both ride and balance in a small hull, and after a fair bit of work Craig came up with a centrally mounted under floor section located mid ships that held both batteries in a spot that left the boat level with the weight being in the middle. This meant there was no dipping in the nose when anglers were casting off the front of the boat. The batteries are easily accessed via a floor hatch, and the 24 volt system runs to an Anderson plug located on the front to which the electric motor and charger can be plugged into.

The second challenge was to modify all the storage so it could take a lot of gear and



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be "modular". Most of the standard Quintrex hulls have plastic mouldings fitted into the hull. These are clean and tidy, but my preference was to make them removable so in the event we needed to pack more gear we could leave them out, such as may be needed for carrying camping gear and other stuff. Removable containers also make it easier to clean the hull. The front central large moulding had to be big enough to hold a 40 litre esky or a bigger one if the moulding was actually removed. There are actually 13 storage compartments in this boat. This modular mouldings system has worked brilliantly. The pics show the idea, and it gives a lot of options. At the back we also modified one of the mouldings to take two standard tackle trays so lures were immediately on hand, and a small central moulding located next to the driver's seat holds keys, wallets, phones etc, but is purposely not drained so it can also be used as a "Gulp" tank to hold the popular Gulp lures that need to be kept in "Gulp juice". This works well. We also made a small section in the floor that acts as a drain sink. I borrowed this idea from my mate Brad Job's Quinnie. This has a

- 1 TOP LEFT:** The custom bow sprit is designed to keep rope on the roller and back to a split bollard.
- 2 ABOVE:** Greeny worked closely with Quintrex's R&D guru Craig Madam to design the perfect estuary boat.
- 3 RIGHT:** The modified "modular" storage allows Greeny to remove containers and take what's required on the day.

bung in it and is connected to the transom so when the boat is messy and hosed out all the mess on the floor goes straight out the back without getting in the bilge.

There are two fixed anchor hatches located up front and these hold rope, spare anchors and tools, spare props and floats. The live bait tank is on the portside back corner behind the insert that holds the tackle trays. The rear starboard hatch holds the fuse box and the spare fuel tank that is plumbed in as a reserve tank to the 60 litre main tank.

The bow sprit has been redesigned with a customised aluminium fitting so the rope stays on the roller and goes back to a split bollard. On the starboard gunwale we fitted a customised net holder for my big barra net that sits it up off the floor flat on the deck. The net is secured via a strap.

The hull was made with a reinforced



5 The 440 Quintrex Hornet has a decent amount of fishing space for a small tinnie.

4 The perfect solution to storing messy Gulp plastics.



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4mm floor which had added to the weight of the boat but has given a very smooth ride. This reinforced floor gives extra strength for a lot of the remote and off-road work I do, and having just spent a few months in the NT I think this was a worthwhile investment. The boat carries a 60hp Yamaha four-stroke to which I have added a foil. Running with a 12 inch prop and a load of gear it runs at about 27 knots. The 60hp Yammie is one of the quietest, fishiest motors on the market and has been faultless in performance so far.

The rod locker is on the port side and carries up to eight outfits to 2.8m in length. There is an open rod storage rack on the starboard side that carries five rods to 2.8m. A combination of open rod storage and a rod locker work very well, as the outfits in use are at hand, and the ones not in use can be stored away from the elements.

The boat is mounted on a Quintrex I-bar aluminium trailer that is a breeze to tow,

is easy to clean and has cable brakes. It has already done over 10,000kms on the road including a bit on corrugations and has proven to be a very tidy unit.

The trailer has a great vented cover made by Runaway Bay Marine Covers. The special vent means that the red dust of remote places doesn't get sucked in from the back of the boat.

My mate Aykut Ahmet did all the electrical and plumbing fit out for me. Aykut is one of the best and meticulous tradesmen I've ever met, and the electrical fitout is a work of art. The boat runs a 998c Humminbird side scanning unit down the back in the skipper's line of sight, and a Lowrance HDS 5 on the casting deck.

Both of these units work extremely well, and side scanning in particular has been a fantastic bonus to most of my fishing. I can truly say side scanning has caught me a lot more big barras than I caught without it. There are four Hella deck mounted lights

with adjustable intensity and red light beams as well.

There is an awful lot of stuff crammed into this boat, but the beauty of the planning is that everything has its place and nothing has been missed.

I know boat mags such as this are always full of lavish praises of particular craft, but as a self-confessed fussy bastard when it comes to boat fit out and practicality of design, I really think *Dead Fishy III* is a good example of careful thought and planning that has come together to create a very practical attractive tiller steer 4.4m tinny. The ride and performance has been great.

Many of the options I've described above may be part of accessorising standard Quintrex packages, but the work by Craig Madam at Quintrex in the research and development end has been a great success in increasing the practicality of the boat for fishing. ■

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